

Amendments to the Claims

The listing of claims below is intended to replace all prior listings of the claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of treatment or prophylaxis of atherosclerosis, which method comprises administration of one or more Growth Hormone Releasing Peptides (GHRPs) to a patient in need of such treatment or prophylaxis.
2. (Original) A method as claimed in Claim 1, which comprises preventing the development of atherosclerotic plaques by administering one or more GHRPs to a patient at risk of developing such plaques, hypercholesterolemia or cardiovascular diseases.
3. (Original) A method as claimed in Claim 1, which comprises treating pre-existing atherosclerosis by administering one or more GHRPs to a patient who has atherosclerosis.
4. (Currently Amended) A method of increasing expression of genes involved in cellular cholesterol efflux, which method comprises administering one or more Growth Hormone Releasing Peptides (GHRPs) to a patient who would benefit from increased expression of such genes.
5. (Original) A method as claimed in Claim 4, wherein the genes involved in cellular cholesterol efflux are those for nuclear receptor LXR α and/or ABCA1 transporter.
6. (Currently Amended) A method as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ Claim 1, wherein the one or more GHRPs are hexarelin (His-(D)-(Me)Trp-Ala-Trp-(D)-Phe-Lys-NH₂) or EP80317 (Haic-(D)-(Me)Trp-(D)-Lys-Trp-(D)-Phe-Lys-NH₂).
- 7-15. (Canceled)
16. (New) A method as claimed in Claim 4, wherein the one or more GHRPs are hexarelin (His-(D)-(Me)Trp-Ala-Trp-(D)-Phe-Lys-NH₂) or EP80317 (Haic-(D)-(Me)Trp-(D)-Lys-Trp-(D)-Phe-Lys-NH₂).
17. (New) A method of treatment or prophylaxis of hypercholesterolemia or a cardiovascular disease associated with atherosclerosis, which method comprises administration of one or more Growth Hormone Releasing Peptides (GHRPs) that are devoid of GH-secreting activity *in vivo* to a patient in need of such treatment or prophylaxis.

18. (New) A method as claimed in Claim 17, which comprises preventing the development of hypercholesterolemia or a cardiovascular disease associated with atherosclerosis by administering one or more GHRPs that are devoid of HG-secreting activity *in vivo* to a patient at risk of developing such hypercholesterolemia or cardiovascular diseases.

19. (New) A method as claimed in Claim 17, which comprises treating pre-existing hypercholesterolemia or a cardiovascular disease associated with atherosclerosis by administering one or more GHRPs that are devoid of GH-secreting activity *in vivo* to a patient who has atherosclerosis, hypercholesterolemia or a cardiovascular disease associated with atherosclerosis.

20. (New) A method as claimed in Claim 17 wherein the cardiovascular disease associated with atherosclerosis is coronary artery disease, myocardial infarction or stroke.

21. (New) A method as claimed in Claim 17 wherein the one or more GHRPs are EP80317 (Haic-(D)-(Me)Trp-(D)-Lys-Trp-(D)-Phe-Lys-NH₂).

22. (New) A method of reducing the total blood plasma cholesterol level of a patient in need of such cholesterol level reduction, which method comprises administering to said patient one or more Growth Hormone Releasing Peptides (GHRPs) that are devoid of GH-secreting activity *in vivo*.

23. (New) A method as claimed in Claim 22 wherein the one or more GHRPs are EP80317 (Haic-(D)-(Me)Trp-(D)-Lys-Trp-(D)-Phe-Lys-NH₂).

24. (New) A method of reducing the blood plasma level of non-HDL cholesterol in a patient in need of such non-HDL cholesterol level reduction, which method comprises administering to said patient one or more Growth Hormone Releasing Peptides (GHRPs) that are devoid of GH-secreting activity *in vivo*.

25. (New) A method as claimed in Claim 24 wherein the one or more GHRPs are EP80317 (Haic-(D)-(Me)Trp-(D)-Lys-Trp-(D)-Phe-Lys-NH₂).

26. (New) A method of preventing or treating atherosclerosis, which method comprises administering a growth hormone releasing peptide of Hexarelin family, a derived peptidomimetic or a CD36 ligand to a patient in need of such prevention or treatment.

27. (New) A method of preventing the development of atherosclerotic lesions, which method comprises administering to a patient in need of such prevention a GHRP derivative, a derived peptidomimetic or a CD36 ligand which modulates the expression of a scavenger receptor B (CD36).

28. (New) A method of preventing the development of atherosclerotic lesions, which method comprises administering to a patient in need of such prevention a GHRP derivative or a derived peptidomimetic which modulates the expression of the ATP-binding cassette ABCA1 transporter and scavenger receptor B (CD36).